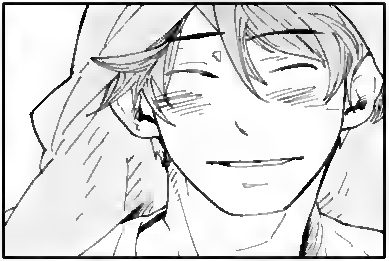

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The Constellation Shine in the Sky, Chapter Four

"SUMMER LANDMARKS"

Sakae Kusama

Published 2007
Originally published in Magazine BexBoy, August 2005

SUMMER LANDMARKS - NOTES

p 108

The sign above the door (the nameplate) says 狐柄ヤエ The only part that's clear is the person's first name, Yae

p 110

"Namu ' is the first word in a Buddhist prayer

p 121

The name on Ouhiko's business card is written in romaji (Japanese words written with the Roman alphabet) instead of kanji (characters borrowed from Chinese) Since the sound "o' could be written with several different Chinese characters, Onhiko tells Minoru which kanji he uses in his name He says the 'o' sound is the kanji meaning ' go ' or 往 It's kinda like saying, "My name is Katie, starting with 'k' and ending with 'ie " If Katie didn't tell you you might think her name is written Catie or Katy or some other way

There are different types of romaji: ' Hepburn," which is commonly used in the west, and "Kunrei shiki/Nihon shiki" which is used in Japan In Hepburn the Japanese letter づ is written "dzu ' In Nihon shiki, it's written "du " That s why the name on the card, O hiko Koduka, differs from the romaji I use, Ouhiko Kodzuka

p 126

In 2005 when this story was written 20,000 yen was approximately 175 U S dollars 50 000 yen was approximately 435 U S dollars

p 129

Pocari Sweat (or simply Pocari) is a sports drink It supposedly replaces the electrolytes lost through sweating.

p 133

Toyama Prefectnre is known for making traditional medicine- For centuries, traveling medicine salesmen have visited Japanese homes They leave a medicine kit, then, the next time the salesman comes by, the family pays for the medicines they used This system of leaving medicine at homes is called ' oki kusuri "

p 135

Ouhiko is referring to soumen which are fine noodles made from wheat flour They are usually sold in bundles and eaten cold in the summer

p 142

The lanterns say "Mourning "

p 146

Minoru calls Ouhiko 'nonke' which is gay slang for straight. Ouhiko is disturbed to hear Minoru talk like a gay man

p 157

The first kanji on the nameplate is '狐 ' This can be read 'ko" or "kitsnne '

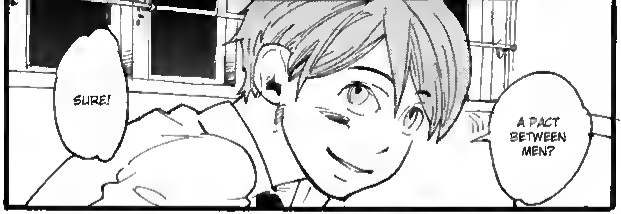
The second kanji on the nameplate is "柄 ' This can be read "hei," ' gara ' "e ' or 'tsuka "

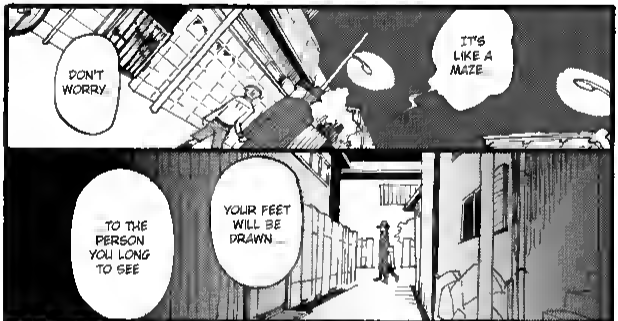
Minoru recognizes the kanji, but he doesn't know which reading is correct After trying a few possibilities, he realizes it says 'Kozduka,' which is Ouhiko's last name He might have made the connection sooner if Ouhiko had used kanji on his business card

SUMMER LANDMARKS

The constellation shine in the sky

GRANDPA
IT'S THE END OF THE MONTH...
...SO I WANT TO VISIT A DEAR FRIEND.
I KNOW.
THIS ISN'T THE WAY HOME.
MINORU.
CAN YOU KEEP A SECRET?


SURE!
A PACT BETWEEN MEN?

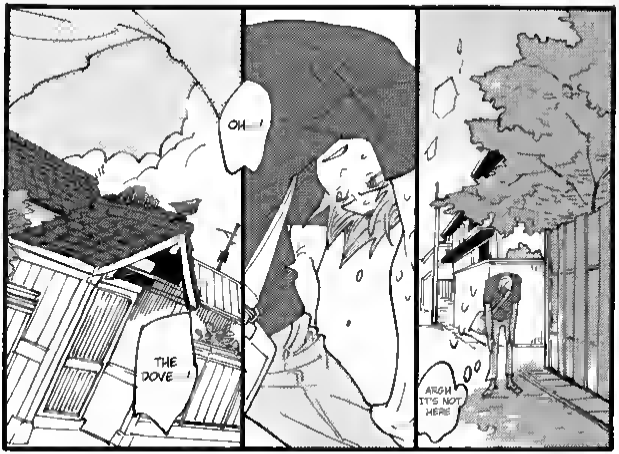

DON'T WORRY.
IT'S LIKE A MAZE.
TO THE PERSON YOU LONG TO SEE
YOUR FEET WILL BE DRAWN...

HEY!
THERE'S A STATUE OF A DOVE ON THE ROOF!
OH.

SO YOU'RE MINORU-KUN?
NICE TO MEET YOU
NO!
YOU'RE PREPARING FOR EXAMS!
THE OLD LADY WHO RENTED THE PLACE DIED.
...AND WE HAVEN'T HAD A TENANT IN FIVE YEARS!
I KNOW...
IT'S BAD LUCK!

Nemu.
I'm Leaving.
GRAND-PA.
MINORU-CHAN!
YEAH
WELL, I'D BETTER GET GOING
HE CAN STUDY FOR HIS EXAMS AT HOME!
TOMOMI-SAN, PLEASE TALK TO HIM!
MINORU

Tomomi-san
I'LL HAVE YOUR THINGS DELIVERED TO THE HOUSE TOMORROW
OK
IT'S QUIETER THERE SO HE'LL GET MORE WORK DONE
MOTHER-IN-LAW
CLARE
Is it that way?
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I COME HERE, I GET LOST...


OH...!
THE DOVE...!
ARGH! IT'S NOT HERE!

HUH?

THE GARDEN IS THRIVING EVEN IN THIS HEAT.
DRIP
OPEN
Sigh.

A PROW-LER...!
ZZZZ...
A Useful Guid
Gay Life
Special Edition
THOSE ARE MY BOOKS...!
True Story, Big Brother and Me
ZZZZ...
DAMN IT

ZZZZ...
TUG
I SHOULD REPORT HIM...
I CAN'T HIT SUCH AN ATTRACTIVE FACE.
I'VE GOT TO HIDE THESE BOOKS
...BEAT HIM UP AND KICK HIM OUT.
I C.IN'T.

AH.
AAH
AAH
!HG
THUNK
HM?
GRAB
UHN
Ouch!
WH...
WHO ARE YOU?!
HOW DID YOU GET A KEY TO THIS PLACE...?

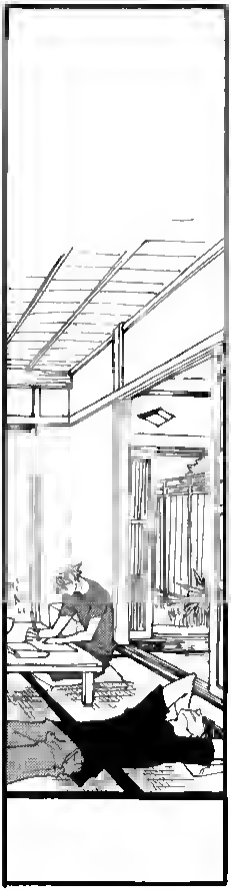
YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE A BURGLAR, BUT...
... I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE STA...
ARE YOU...
...RENTING THIS PLACE? THE OWNER?
IT'S NOT REALLY MINE BUT...
MY FAMILY RENTS IT OUT.
Glance
SIDEWAYS
THE SINS OF THE GRANDFATHER ARE VISITED ON THE GRANDSON

?
?
visited on the grandson?
FOR MY JOB
I'VE BEEN STAYING AT A BUSINESS HOTEL FOR THE PAST WEEK
BUT IT'S REALLY SMALL AND GLOOMY
CLUNK
AND THIS PLACE
SINKING IN
IS LIKE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR
Sorry for trespassing.
OH, BUT
...

SO...
...YOU WATERED THE GARDEN.
YEAH.
THAT'S GOOD. I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO COME HERE FOR A WHILE
SIGH-
I WAS THINKING IT MIGHT DRY OUT
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET

splash
RATTLE
SORRY TO DISTURB YOU
STARE
yawn
AAGH!
JUST LET ME HAVE A CORNER OF A ROOM SOMEWHERE.
THE INN HAS WINDOWS THAT FACE EAST. IT'S SWELTERING IN THE MORNING.
THE GUY FROM YESTERDAY

"OU" IS WRITTEN LIKE "GO" AND "HIKO..."
He brought food?
HERE HAVE SOME BREAK-FAST
LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF
TERAOKA DETECTIVE AGENCY
O-hiko Kofuku
KOIZUKA-SAN...?
A DE-TEC-TIVE?
YOU CAN CALL ME OUHIKO
GRANDMA HIRED HIM...!



AM I BEING WATCHED?
OR COULD IT BE...
THIS HOUSE?

IT'S BEEN THREE DAYS.
I'VE GOTTEN USED TO HIS DAILY SURVEILLANCE.
I CAN'T LET MY GUARD DOWN
AFTER LUNCH, HE INVARIABLY TAKES A NAP.
I FEEL THE DESIRE TO TOUCH HIS ADAM'S APPLE WELLING UP INSIDE ME, BUT...

...I'LL CONTROL MYSELF AND JUST WATCH HIM.
This is sexual harassment.
HE'LL WAKE UP IF I TOUCH HIM
I CAN'T CONCENTRATE
SIGH
I'LL DO SOME WEEDING
HM ?

IF I PULL OUT SOME OF THIS GRASS...
OH
HI
SIGH
...WILL THIS LOOK MORE LIKE A GARDEN?
LUSH GREENERY ON THE EDGES IS MORE TASTEFUL...
Hm.
I'M TAKING A BREAK!
...DIDN'T YOU COME HERE TO PREPARE FOR YOUR EXAMS?
YOU KNOW, PLAYING AROUND IN THE GARDEN IS FINE, BUT...
?
?

A HOUSE FOR STUDYING...
Rich people are scary
WELL...
SNAP
...THIS PLACE HAS BEEN VACANT FOR QUITE A WHILE
SOMEONE NEEDS TO LOOK AFTER IT
QUITE A WHILE? IS THE RENT HIGH?
TEN YEARS AGO, IT WAS 20,000 YEN A MONTH
THAT'S CHEAP!
YOU COULD GET 50,000 FOR IT NOW

BESIDES
...WE CAN'T RENT THIS PLACE TO ANYONE NOW...
BECAUSE
THE RENT WAS SO LOW BECAUSE THE TENANT WAS A FRIEND
...I PROMISED MY GRAND-FATHER...
!
...I'D LEAVE IT THE WAY IT WAS WHEN SHE LIVED HERE.
SHE?

AND SHE WAS YOUR GRAND-FATHER'S WHAT?
IT'S A SECRET.
SHE WAS...?
HUH?
BE-SIDE!...
drip
drip
...MY SWEAT IS AWFULLY DARK...
HUH? IS MY NOSE BLEEDING?
...AND WARM.
FLUMP
Hey!

AH URGH
SQUEAK
THIS WILL COOL YOU DOWN AT ANY RATE
vssssh...
I'LL BUY SOME POCARI OR SOMETHING...
OU...
HIKO-SAN
FORGET WHAT I SAID...
BEFORE

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS IT...
ssssh...
MY GRANDFATHER'S SECRET...
JUST ME...
...AND GRANDPA.

IT'S COOL.
brrrrr

THERE'S A BREEZE...
OH
HEY... YOU ALL RIGHT?
NO
WHAT THE...?
MY CLOTHES...
YOUR CLOTHES? OH, YEAH...
UH
YOU WANNA GO TO THE HOSPITAL?

AH
UUGH
They were soaking wet.
SORRY I CHANGED THEM
THAT SUNBURN ON YOUR NECK...
...IT'S ALMOST BLISTERING
RIGHT!
SORRY

IS THAT YOURS OUHIKO-SAN?
MY MEDICINE BOX...
I WAS WORRIED
It's in the kitchen
THE NIGHT BEFORE YOU ARRIVED...
POP
...I HAD A VISITOR FROM TOYAMA.
YOU'RE TAKING MEDI-CINE FROM A PEDDLER?!
Haa, haa...
BUT, SEE, WHEN I GO LIKE THIS
GRAB
Uuugh!

...IT HELPS.
THIS FEELING...
OH
WHAT IS THIS?
NO MATTER HOW MANY YEARS PASS...
I'M DONE.

...IT DOESN'T FADE.
?
HUH?
ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE...
WELL, HOW MANY BUNDLES OF NOODLES DO YOU WANT?
I'm having two.
I'LL HAVE TWO ALSO!
I'll fry some eggs too...

IT'S COLD THIS MORNING...
SHIVER
YESTER-DAY—
turning around
ORDI-NARILY...
OUHKO-SAN IS ALREADY HERE...

When he changed my clothes, did I get hard without knowing it?
aagh
NO WAY!
...WHAT DID I DO?
RATTLE
!

GOOD MORNING.
THIS IS FOR YOU.
I'M GUESSING YOU DIDN'T MAKE BREAKFAST.
HEHE.

Huh?!
YOU'RE LEAVING ALREADY ?
SEE YA
OH WELL
SURE IT'S COOL OUT TODAY
I CAN'T WORK WITHOUT MY COMPUTER

BEEP
HEY, WHAT'S UP?
HUH?
UH
I'M GOING TO GET IT
AND GET SOME COFFEE TOO
OK
I SEE

I MADE HIM STAY BUT...
MAYBE HE HAD SOMETHING TO DO
sniff
SO...
WAIT...
I'M ON VACATION UNTIL NEXT WEDNESDAY.
I MAY BE ON VACATION, BUT I'M NOT JUST HANGING OUT.
No I don't have free time I'm busy
WELL...
COME TO WORK TOMOR-ROW?!

A PLACE TO LIVE. A PLACE TO WORK. AND A FUNERAL
WHAT DO YOU CALL A MAN WHO TAKES CARE OF THOSE THINGS?
IS THIS A RIDDLE?
THE PERSON HE TOOK CARE OF
WAS A WIDOW. HER HUSBAND DIED AND LEFT HER WITH A SMALL CHILD
GULP
FIVE YEARS AGO. HER FUNERAL WAS HELD AT THIS HOUSE.
ALL THE NEIGHBORS REMEMBERED

...THAT THE GARDEN HAD BEEN FILLED WITH WHITE FLOWERS
I GUESS, I CAME HERE TO FIND
..YOUR GRAND-FATHER'S SECRET.
AND, YET...
I DISCOVERED YOUR SECRET IS THOSE BOOKS

DID YOU DO SOMETHING TO ME ON THAT FIRST DAY?
blush
N—
N
...
WHAT?!
NO!
Well, I come close to it.
I'M SORRY.
I TOUCHED YOU YESTERDAY

WH...
WH
UM, WELL...
You didn't see this coming?
WHERE EXACTLY?
CAN I
TOUCH YOU, TOO?
YES

NN...
I THOUGHT YOU WERE STRAIGHT, OUHIKO-SAN.
SIGH
THAT'S SCARY. DON'T USE JARGON LIKE THAT...
I'VE BEEN OKAY WITH IT SINCE YESTERDAY.
HUH?
YOU'RE OKAY WITH KISSING ME?
HH...

OH HIKO SA...
Ah
Uh. slippery
AH
Uh.
Nn.
wet
UH
SHUDDER
shake
Ah.
SLUMP
Argh.
ABOUT GRANDPA AND THAT WOMAN...

AT THE END OF THE MONTH HE'D COME TO COLLECT THE RENT...
...AND THEY WOULD DRINK TEA TOGETHER
WHEN THEY SAW EACH OTHER, THEY'D BECOME SHY AND QUIET...
IF YOU'RE THINKING I DID THOSE THINGS BECAUSE I WANTED INFORMATION...
HE BROUGHT ME ALONG TO BUY SOME TIME
HEY...

YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT?
TO THIS DAY, EVEN HER OWN SON THINKS THEY WERE LOVERS.
SHE WAS A LADY IN THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD THAT HE ADORED AS A CHILD.
THEY WERE NEVER LOVERS. IT WAS UNREQUITED LOVE
?!
OUHIKO-SAN, YOUR CLIENT.
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
HOME
YOU SAID GRANDMA'S IN TROUBLE
Ugh!
EXCUSE ME
OH MINORU!

Oh
DID YOU LEAVE ANY FOOD OVER THERE?
WHAT?!
WELL, YOU'D BETTER PICK IT UP WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK...
WHO WERE THOSE PEOPLE I SAW BE-FORE...?
Shhh!
SHE'S BEEN TRYING TO FIND SOMETHING WRONG WITH THAT HOUSE SO YOU'D HAVE TO COME HOME, MINORU...
...AND IT'S SEEMS SHE FOUND IT.
YOUR GRANDFATHER LEFT A BITTER LEGACY...

HONESTLY, HE WAS COLLECTING MONEY!
Contract for the Sale of Real Estate
HIS LOVER!
How filthy!
I can't believe it!
Grumble
Grumble
I STOOD BY AND WATCHED MANY TIMES
YOU'RE WRONG!
THAT WAS JUST AN EXCUSE!
GRANDPA ONLY CAME TO GET THE RENT!

HOW DO YOU KNOW, MINORU-CHAN?
IT'S NOT LIKE WE COULDN'T FIND A TENANT FOR FIVE YEARS
THE HOUSE'S RENTAL LICENSE HAS BEEN SUSPENDED
MOTHER-IN-LAW...
A HOUSE LIKE THAT...

I'M GLAD TO BE RID OF IT.
THREE DAYS LATER...
...WHEN I WENT TO PICK UP MY STUFF, I GOT LOST ON THE WAY AGAIN.
THE GRASS WAS ALREADY GETTING LONG...
...AND THE MEDICINE BOX WAS GONE.

EVERYTHING WAS GONE.
Management
EVEN THE BUSINESS CARD THAT OUHIKO-SAN HAD GIVEN ME...
I'M SORRY, GRANDPA.
I BROKE MY PROMISE

CAN I TAKE IT?
THE NAME-PLATE
GOT IT
groan
CRACK
CREAK
CREAK
DAMN

?
KITSUNE-GARA...?
EH?
OH
TSUKA?
WHAT THE...?
OUHIKO
KODZUKA...?
"YOU CAN CALL ME OUHIKO."
Ouhiko Kodzuka
"KODZUKA-SAN?"

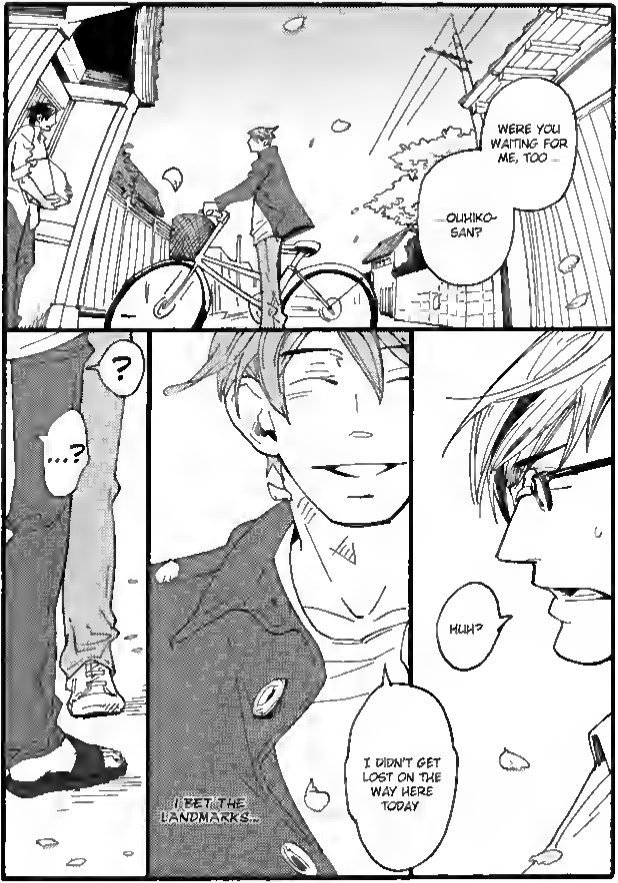
WHEN MY GRAND-MOTHER'S ANGER SUBSIDED...
I'D PASSED MY COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS...
...AND BEGUN LIVING ON MY OWN.
HERE'S THE BANK
AND THE SUPER-MARKET
Akusai

I'M SURE IT'S THIS LINE...
SIGH
click
click
THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD...
...IS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS.
I'M JUST SAD THAT IT'S GONE
PUSH

THAT HOUSE...
IF I DON'T STAY ON ROUTE, I'LL NEVER GET THERE.
MAYBE IT'S BEEN TURNED INTO AN EMPTY LOT ALREADY
...BEFORE I GET LOST...
RUMBLE
VROOOM
MAYBE I SHOULD GO BACK...
SQUEEAK

SOMEONE TOOK MY NAMEPLATE
WAS IT YOU!?
YEAH
SO YOU FIGURED IT OUT?
SHE WAS MY GRAND-MOTHER ON MY FATHER'S SIDE
YEAH I'VE BEEN THINKING

I DON'T KNOW.
DO YOU THINK YOUR GRANDMOTHER...
WINTER CLOTHES
PROBABLY
SHE LIKED HIM ENOUGH TO CHOOSE TEA AND A MONTHLY CHAT OVER LIVING WITH HER OWN SON.
...LOVED MY GRANDPA A LITTLE, OUHIKO-SAN?
WELL, PERHAPS...


WERE YOU WAITING FOR ME, TOO—
—OUHIKO-SAN?
HUH?
I DIDN'T GET LOST ON THE WAY HERE TODAY
I BET THE LANDMARKS...
...?
?

...DREW TOGETHER...

YOU CAN TELL ME THE WHOLE STORY INSIDE

WE CAN'T KISS IN PUBLIC

...TWO PEOPLE WHO WERE LONGING TO SEE EACH OTHER.

Welcome to my 25-year mortgaged home

You're not renting it?!

SUMMER LANDMARKS END